

Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Will Cassidy, I am a resident of Ashford and strongly oppose H.B. 6816. My concern lies in multiple aspects of the proposed language. The concept of microstamping raises multiple concerns in my mind. Due to its as yet unknown feasibility regarding cost of implementation and the cost that is passed to the purchaser of a firearm, I see the potential for increased financial hardship for legitimate firearms buyers. I am concerned about liability issues stemming from utilizing microstamped cases in reloading practice; if a stamped case is reloaded and utilized in commission of a crime by a third party in an unstamped firearm which is not recovered, the prospect of significant hardship in legal defense exists. Triviality of part replacement is also a concern. Microstamped parts can likely be replaced, firearm components that contact cartridge or projectile (barrels, firing pins, extractors, ejectors, bolts or slides) are rarely serialized or controlled by federal regulation and are often legitimately replaced for wear and maintenance issues. Similarly, an individual intent on committing a criminal act with a microstamped firearm, should they not just replace a part, may well chose to obscure or obliterate said stamp by means of a chamber reamer, barrel lining, lapping, filing, or other reasonably common and otherwise legitimate gunsmithing practice (reputable instruction is available on YouTube). Microstamping, even if left in place in a firearm would provide no preventative measure in defeating crime, therefore its advocates would only see potential cost inflicted upon lawful individuals (with great potential flaws) in the hopes of easing prosecutorial burden should a microstamped firearm be recovered in commission of a criminal act.

My concern in restricting all ammunition purchases to the age of 21 stems from the need for a hunter to purchase ammunition. Currently, an 18 year old hunter may purchase ammunition after obtaining a certificate to do so (hunting licenses can be procured by those with hunter education certification from the age of 12 in CT). To further restrict the purchase of ammunition limits an individual during what may be a critical juncture in the development of a hunter. Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) in addition to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and many state agencies have conducted research into adoption of hunting in light of decreasing hunter numbers and resultant wildlife management concerns. A nationwide pattern emerges for those with early exposure to hunting. For those that are able to hunt in their teenage years, their interest or logistical capability wanes through their 20s and early 30s and begins to build back again when life and resources allow. The further restriction of an individual in their late teens to procure ammunition for hunting or proficiency purposes contradicts any effort otherwise underway to reinforce hunting as a means of wildlife management and lifestyle that is ultimately necessary to reinforce the activity later in life (multiple exposures and reinforcement of an activity being beneficial to its adoption as reported on by Matt Dunfee's WMI white paper on the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model). Furthermore, as all ammunition sales contribute to the pool of funds distributed to states yearly for wildlife management activities (by way of the Pittman-Robertson Act), restriction of a demographic from purchasing ammunition for hunting, training, or competition purposes (where high round counts lead to significant excise tax totals;

skeet, trap, sporting clays, five stand, small bore rifle, high power rifle, biathlon, etc.) may well have an impact of diminished wildlife agency funding.

Lastly, the concept of creating a misdemeanor out of the possession of body armor is exceedingly arbitrary and capricious. Use of such armor has legitimate lawful purpose outside of military and law enforcement use, to include panels designed for children's backpacks. Citizens who choose to pursue firearms training where use of steel targets at short ranges increase risk of ricochets, may choose (or may be required by instructors) to procure body armor for their safety. The concept that such products would be ruled illegal, demonstrates ignorance at best, and ill will towards the citizenry of the state at worst. Further, it is my understanding, and perhaps the committee has information to the contrary, that the use of body armor in successful commission of crimes in Connecticut is without significant bearing. Should that be the case, one must wonder what this revision of statute would accomplish in a state where procurement of body armor is more regulated than in the majority of other states in the country.

For the three major reasons outlined above and their multiple specific attributes, I strongly oppose seeing H.B. 6816 leave committee. I hope that the points that I have made provide reasonable support of my opposition and compel you to act accordingly.

Thank you for your time,

Will Cassidy